



Los Angeles County  
*Mental Health Wellness Magazine*

# Minds & Matters

FALL 2014

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## CAMP KILPATRICK REPLACEMENT PROJECT BREAKS GROUND

**By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director**

On September 12, 2014, Los Angeles County Board Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Third District, joined multiple LA County agencies in commemorating the replacement of Camp Vernon Kilpatrick detention facility for youth in Malibu. The camp, initially built in 1962 as military barracks, will be demolished in order to build a new facility.

The camp was made famous by the film "The Gridiron Gang," which depicted the camp's championship football team, the Mustangs, led by LA County Probation staff member and coach Sean Porter, portrayed by actor Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson in the movie. Porter used sports to get detainees to change their attitudes and behavior and become "winners" in life. Jerry Powers, Chief Probation Officer, spoke about the necessity of updating the facility and changing the model of treatment for detained youth. The "L.A. Model" will now be used, seeing youth in small groups with more personal attention for better outcomes.

Many county agencies are contributing skills and resources to making the new camp a success. Speakers from each department included: LACDMH District Chief, Karen Streich; Dr. Arturo Delgado, Superintendent, LA County Office of Education; Dr. Raymond Perry, Medical Director, Juvenile Court Services, Department of Health Services; Massood Eftekhari, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works; Laura Zucker, LA County Arts Commission; and Carol Biondi, Commissioner, LA County Commission for Children and Families.

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# Minds & Matters

From Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., Director  
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



## ***CALIFORNIA DREAMING***

In many parts of the country, this time of year is associated with falling leaves, brisk evenings and school starting up again. But for those of us in Southern California, the fall might be associated with fires, Santa Ana winds and school starting again.

All of which is only to say that our experience in California is sometimes different and more dramatic than other places. Our public mental health system is another example of the difference that geography can make. Because of Senator Steinberg's leadership with the Mental Health Services Act and continuing local support from the CEO and the Board of Supervisors, the public mental health system in Los Angeles grew substantially in the face of the recession when it was being cut back massively in most jurisdictions. But that does not mean that it has been easy. As I said, we live in a dramatic landscape with the responsibility of providing care in jails and probation camps, in responding to the needs of homeless populations, in dealing with the special trauma of children involved in the foster care system, and in making sure that that quality care can be provided to our various cultural and linguistic sub groups. All of this has pushed our resources to their limits.

But there is more to come. In California, we are dramatic and we are dreamers. We dream of putting together a way of integrating mental health services into the larger health system that incorporates the lessons of the recovery model, lessens the stigma our clients face and improves the quality of the mental health care they receive. That dream is taking the form of "Health Neighborhoods" which would not only provide the venue for integrating and coordinating care among health, mental health and substance abuse providers, but also be the platforms around which communities would organize to address the social determinants of health outcomes that affect their particular community.

Sound like a pipe dream? Well, we are starting to make it come true. The geographic District Chiefs are taking the responsibility of working with the Area Public Health Officers to organize community efforts. Faith communities of all denominations are asking how they can participate in these efforts. We are teaming up with other county departments, FQHCs and research universities and foundations. The challenges are high and the stakes are great, but we may be developing the model system of public mental health care in the country. It's our dream. Help it come true.

*Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.*

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# Employee Recognition

## Retired

### August 2014

Janice Ewing, 21yrs,  
Lydia Jones, 13yrs,  
Nancy Rose, 11yrs,  
Ollie Harris, 41yrs,  
Veronica Jones, 40yrs,  
Yoko Sugihara, 23yrs,

### September 2014

Bernardo Begonia, 11yrs,  
Catherine Stovall, 11yrs,  
Joyce Fantroy, 43yrs,  
Mabel Guertin, 12yrs,  
Yong Yu, 27yrs

### October 2014

Anne Bell, 13 yrs,  
Elena Extra, 39 yrs,  
June Baird, 15 yrs,  
Jacqueline Clingman,  
17 yrs,  
Martha Lojaro, 42 yrs,  
Susan Henderson, 21 yrs

## 30 YEARS AND COUNTING

By Matias Cardiel, MPA, MCW II, LACDMH Rio Hondo MHC



On August 20, 2014, the Rio Hondo Family recognized and celebrated Michael Starr, volunteer extraordinaire, for his 30 years of service.

Starr began volunteering at Rio Hondo on June 1, 1984. His hard work and dedication is only overshadowed by his wonderful personality. He is truly an integral part of what makes working at Rio Hondo a joy. He is loved and respected for the dedication and commitment he has shown to the one place he considers his second home.

For his service, he received a certificate of commendation from the Board of Supervisors presented by Program Head Louis Suncin, LCSW, District Chief Ana Suarez, LCSW and Deputy Director Cathy Warner, LCSW.

From all of us at Rio Hondo and LACDMH, we would like to say THANK YOU!

## LACDMH COASTAL API STAFF HELPS SAVE MAN'S LIFE



In August, a client came to his regular appointment with his case manager at the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's (LACDMH) Coastal API Family Mental Health Clinic. As soon as he signed in and took a seat in the lobby, he immediately collapsed forward.

At the time, a supervisor walked by and noticed this, immediately directing the receptionist to call 911 for help. The security guard quickly cleared out other clients who were in the lobby. A "code blue" was activated at the clinic as the supervisor called the nurse, psychiatrist and program head to the lobby. The nurse and psychiatrist both started CPR on the client. Within minutes, the fire department and paramedics were on-site to attend to the client. The psychiatrist (who was not the client's attending psychiatrist) and the client's case manager provided the paramedics with the client's allergy information and other necessary medications information. The client was revived and was taken to the hospital by ambulance.

"This incident captures our extraordinary team work and the quality of services that we provide to our clients from the beginning to the end," said Helen Chang, L.C.S.W., Clinical Program Head at Coastal API. "This clinic is exceptional in the way we communicate with each other which is always client-focused, and all of us believe in the quality of the services that we deliver to our clients."



## MLK MH UCC BY EXODUS READY TO OPEN ITS DOORS

By Karen Zarsadias-Ige, LACDMH Public Information Officer II

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Mental Health Urgent Care Center (MLK MH UCC) held its ribbon-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, August 27th to officially open its doors. Hosted by Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, the event was heavily attended by county and healthcare leaders, including the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), Department of Public Health and Department of Health Services.

"We look forward to opening this mental health center so that more residents can receive the services that will improve their lives," said Supervisor Ridley-Thomas. "These types of services go a long way toward saving taxpayer dollars and effectively keeping people out of jails, off the streets and into rehabilitation."

"People living in crisis will have a better chance at recovery because of what we're doing here today," stated Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., LACDMH Director. During his remarks, Dr. Southard also spoke about the importance of support from both the MLK MH UCC and the community in working toward the wellness of the person as a whole.

The facility opened its doors to the public on Thursday, September 4th. The urgent care center is a newly refurbished two-story building which brings preventive and emergency care services to the region. The center will operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (including holidays), offering a variety of services, including psychiatric evaluation and assessment, crisis intervention, medication support and medication management. Adults and teens are able to receive treatment, counseling for alcohol and drugs, and other types of help and referrals. Exodus Foundation for Recovery will run the MLK MH UCC.





## LA COUNTY AGENCIES CREATE MOU AND LAUNCH THIRD DISTRICT DIVERSION PROGRAM

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director

In front of the Van Nuys courthouse on Wednesday, September 17, 2014, LA County Board Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky unveiled the Third District Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Program, a new court-based pilot program to divert seriously mentally ill, non-violent offenders from incarceration into treatment with health and mental health services. Multiple county agencies worked together to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to make the diversion program a reality.

Los Angeles County currently spends a substantial amount of money providing mental health treatment and custodial care for an average daily census of more than 3,500 County jail inmates with mental illness. Mentally ill defendants unable to make bail spend more time in custody, and their court cases often take longer to adjudicate, owing to their mental condition, further adding to the costs. Incarceration disrupts their treatment in the community, exacerbating symptoms, contributes to or perpetuates homelessness and impedes recovery.

Diversion programs, by contrast, can lead to better outcomes for people with mental illness and their communities. The Los Angeles County Third District Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Program is designed for adults who are chronically homeless, seriously mentally ill and commit select misdemeanor and felony crimes. This pilot program will divert chronically homeless and seriously mentally ill adults from the traditional fines, probation and incarceration imposed on misdemeanor and low-level felony offenses, and place them on a path to secure permanent, supportive housing and consistent treatment of their mental illnesses.

Qualifying misdemeanants will be screened and offered an opportunity to participate in the program at the initial arraignment and plea stage, before charges are filed or a plea entered. If they elect to participate, they will be released to San Fernando Valley Mental Health Services, placed in bridge or transitional housing, and offered a variety of support services, including health and mental health care, group and individual treatment and support, employment and vocational services. Misdemeanants who successfully complete the 90-day diversion program – paying restitution, complying with requirements, committing no new offenses – will see their charges dismissed.

Qualifying felons will be required to plead guilty or no contest to their charges and complete an 18-month diversion program with the same requirements. For felons who successfully complete diversion, in certain cases, the court will terminate probation early after 18 months and dismiss the case. In other cases, the negotiated sentence will stand, but defendants may seek dismissal later on, after successfully completing 36 months of formal probation.

The program's goal is to reduce recidivism rates among low-level offenders, minimize the drain on scarce justice system resources, and better assist the chronically homeless and seriously mentally ill population that commit misdemeanors and low-level felony crimes to achieve stability in permanent supportive housing linked to services.

## 4TH ANNUAL LA COUNTY SUICIDE PREVENTION NETWORK SUMMIT CONVENES

By Karen Zarsadiaz-Ige, LACDMH Public Information Officer

On Tuesday, September 9th, 2014, the Los Angeles County Suicide Prevention Network met for the fourth annual Suicide Prevention Summit at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. Presented by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and funded by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), this year's all-day conference was titled *Emerging Best Practices in Suicide Prevention*.

LACDMH Medical Director Roderick Shaner, MD, welcomed the more than 250 attendees to the conference. He gave an overview of the summit and discussed the importance of the Suicide Prevention Network now more than ever as the community continues to mourn the loss of actor Robin Williams. Dr. Shaner spoke about the increased awareness of mental health and suicide since Williams' death, and the overwhelming response of the public to talk more openly about helping others faced with mental health challenges.

Following Dr. Shaner, LACDMH Medical Director of the Child, Youth and Family Administration, William Arroyo, MD, and CalMHSA's Theresa Ly, MPH, each gave their opening remarks to the crowded room. Participants then attended two breakout sessions during the day before finishing out the conference.

At the summit, several resource tables were on-hand to pass out information regarding suicide prevention, including LACDMH and Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services.

## ARMENIAN AND RUSSIAN MENTAL HEALTH PSAs ON AIR NOW



The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Eastern European Middle Eastern (EE/ME) Under Represented Ethnic Populations (UREP) Committee is sponsoring a televised, multi-lingual media outreach campaign for the Fiscal Year 2013-2014.

The media outreach campaign will consist of four LACDMH-approved public service announcements (PSAs) in Armenian and Russian languages. These PSAs will be aired on Armenian and Russian TV stations through the County of Los Angeles.

Armenian and Russian-speaking TV personalities and celebrities are featured in the PSAs. As a UREP Capacity Building Project targeting the Russian and Armenian-speaking communities in Los Angeles County, PSAs will educate these communities and increase their awareness regarding mental health issues such as depression/anxiety, substance abuse and domestic violence.

The ultimate goal of the PSAs is to provide mental health education, increase awareness about common mental health issues, and provide referral and linkage information to the Armenian and Russian communities.

PSAs began airing earlier this month on the following TV stations: US Armenia, Shant TV, Best TV, New Wave TV, Horizon TV, Armenian American Broadcasting Corporation (AABC TV) and Hye Vision.



# hope wellness recovery

## LACDMH Mission

*Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.*

## Our Values

**Integrity:** We conduct ourselves professionally according to the highest ethical standards.

**Respect:** We recognize the uniqueness of every individual and treat all people in a way that affirms their personal worth and dignity.

**Accountability:** We take responsibility for our choices and their outcomes.

**Collaboration:** We work together toward common goals by partnering with the whole community, sharing knowledge, building strong consensus, and sharing decision-making.

**Dedication:** We will do whatever it takes to improve the lives of our clients and communities.

**Transparency:** We openly convey our ideas, decisions and outcomes to ensure trust in our organization.

**Quality and Excellence:** We identify the highest personal, organizational, professional and clinical standards and commit ourselves to achieving those standards by continually improving every aspect of our performance.



Los Angeles County  
Department of Mental Health  
is dedicated to partnering with  
clients, families and communities  
to create hope, wellness and recovery.



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# A Final Thought



## HISTORY OF MEDICAL HOMES AND HEALTH NEIGHBORHOODS

**By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director**

LACDMH, in collaboration with other LA County agencies and LA Care, will be implementing health neighborhoods in all Service Areas of Los Angeles County, with LACDMH District Chiefs leading the way.

The origin of health neighborhoods lay in the medical home concept, which originated in 1967 as a center for children's records and was developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The medical home created partnerships between patient, family and primary care providers, in conjunction with treatment and support services from specialists and community organizations. Guidelines of the medical home included the essential characteristics of effective care: accessibility, family-centered, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, compassionate and culturally competent. Evolved from the medical home model, the health home model followed and was designed to facilitate access to, and coordination of, a full array of physical health services, behavioral health care, treatment and long-term community-based services and supports.

The current LACDMH health neighborhood initiative will utilize a combination of health, mental health and substance use providers designed to serve all residents of Los Angeles County. Participating service providers will establish collaborative relationships with each other to integrate whole-person care. Health neighborhoods will improve access and facilitate referrals to necessary services. Collaborating agencies will provide community and governmental resources for housing, education, spirituality, vocation and prevention services, to support optimal health and promote hope, wellness and recovery in all communities.

As part of the health home initiative, LA County providers will screen patients for mental health and substance use issues and effectively coordinate care for those patients seen by multiple participating providers. They will be able to utilize a variety of culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health and substance use resources, increase the understanding of supportive services in the community, improve treatment adherence and clinical outcomes for patients through the addition of specialty services and supports, decrease duplication of services through improved communication and coordination, and explore possible co-locations of mental health providers.

Health Neighborhoods will be piloted in Lancaster, Pacoima, Boyle Heights, MLK/Watts/Willowbrook, and Central Long Beach, as well other parts of LA County.